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## SHADOWS OF THE ARTIST'S IDEAL

BY MARGUERITE TRACY.

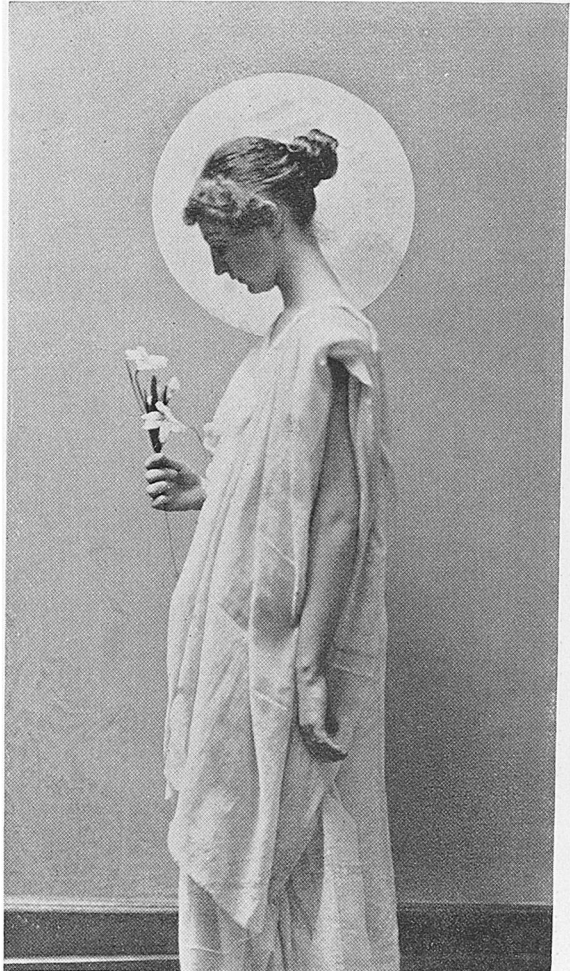
*With illustrations selected from our last photographic prize competition.*

“ . . . . . He would fain  
(But could not) see me always, as befell  
His dream to see me, plucking asphodel  
In saffron robes on some celestial plain.”—E. R. SILL.

THROUGH its ever-changing environment the poet looks straight into the deeps and shallows of human life and reproduces them unhampered; but the artist, forced to interpret through the visible form, longs for another day when dignified and simple folds shall drape without distorting the figure.

The artists, the poets, the historians of Greece have preserved for us the type of a perfection in form and costume from which we have strayed—the artists among us looking back regretfully. And it is their looking back that has kept the Greek influence alive through all the excesses of elaborateness and severity that have overshadowed it. It has been a restraining hand, invisible and seeming to accomplish little; but who can tell to what a pass we might have come without it?

Among the accompanying illustrations “Are They the Real That Blossoms and Passes,” photographed by Gertrude Kasebier, to which was awarded the prize for selection of model, pose and general composition in our prize competition, fulfils the requirements of this type in many essentials. It possesses an intrinsic charm of poetic composition. As the girl in “Are They the Real” looks down on the blossoms in her hand, one cannot but think of Echo, the wood nymph who loved



*Photographed by Gertrude Kasebier.*

“Are they the real that blossoms and passes,  
The flowers that fade and the withered grasses,  
Or only the shadows of form divine?”

Narcissus and pined for him, growing day by day more ethereal, until she became only a soft voice calling him through the woods and by the river brink. Narcissus never answered. With heart breaking for his dead sister, he haunted the streams and fountains, dreaming that his own reflection was the lost face that had resembled his. In sweet compassion the gods changed him at last into the flower which bears his name and that still loves to bend its head above the water edges.

The costume, with its simple, ungirdled chiton or tunic, belongs to a well-known form of Greek dress which consisted of two very long pieces of cloth pinned or clasped at the shoulders, letting the superfluous length fall like a mantle over the breast and down the back. The chiton was sometimes shortened by being drawn up over a girdle, and sometimes, as in "Are They the Real," left to hang in its own full, loose folds. Often two girdles were worn, the widest one very low and the narrowest very high, giving a new set of folds between. Miss E. F. Farnsworth's picture "When Evening Cometh On," which received the prize for historical accuracy, shows the double girdle, although, as she explains, it does not consist of two separate belts. "The dress," she says, "was pale violet trimmed with silver—the metal belt in front being continued with braid which crossed in the back and went over the shoulders. There is little I can add besides the picture. It is a correct dress of a Greek lady when Greek art was at its height."



*Photographed by Miss E. F. Farnsworth.*

*"When evening cometh on anear doth life stand to the great unknown,  
In silence reaching out her sentient hand."*

And indeed there is little that one need add about a picture which speaks with such lofty, serene eloquence. While very different in thought, the beautiful harmony of costume and composition is even more felt than in "Are They the Real." One sees the hushed tones of the western sky, the deepening purple of the hills, the

dun shadows that steal across the lingering glory of the water, and one feels the insistent mystery of twilight pressing close.

The chiton was the most important garment and was worn next to the body. For greater warmth the himation, or cloak, a little shorter than the chiton, was worn above, and sometimes the himation was worn without the chiton. Sometimes the free, mantle-like drapery of the long chiton was separate and often much modified in form into cloak or fitting jacket. The peplum, a long shawl or scarf, was wound outside all the other garments according to the taste and convenience of the wearer. The chiton, the himation and the peplum are the elements of the Grecian costume, their many changes and modifications showing the rise and fall of Grecian art. Great richness of ornamentation marked the early, more barbaric, years,



*Photographed by Carrie B. Hicks.*

"If once my thought were told,  
All men would feel it warm at heart."



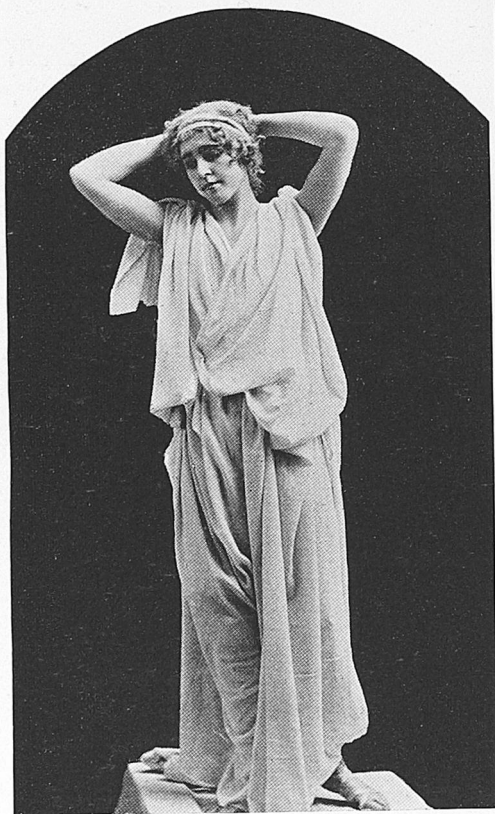
*Photographed by Charles E. Fairman.*

"What vision, born  
Of unfulfilment, fades in mere self-scorn,  
Or grows from that still twilight stealing round?"

and was recurred to in more refined form in the extravagant centuries just preceding the Christian era. At the time of its highest development, however, the costume was extremely simple and undorned, its beauty depending on the softness of the material and the exquisite grace of its folds.

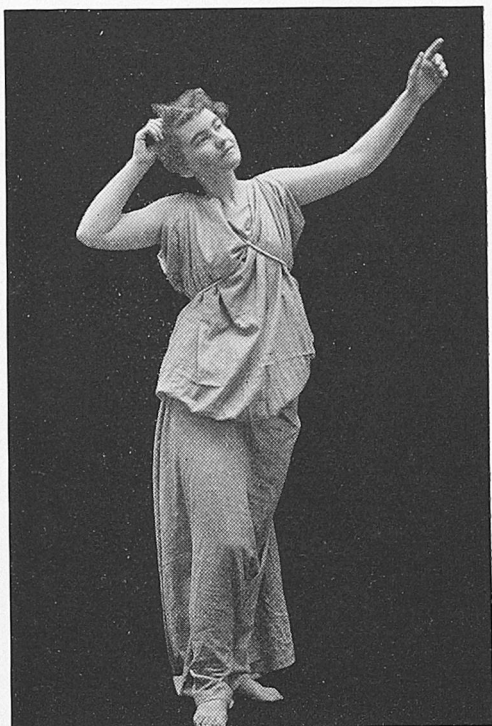
As in "Are They the Real" this simplicity is observed in "Thine Eyes too Wise," photographed by Miss Dora Winter Jaixen. She says of it "I wished to portray the idealistic and spiritual in one subject, and perhaps a touch of the Byzantine school."

The Byzantine traces, if any, are very slight, as Byzantine dress was much influenced by oriental taste — weak-hearted, shuttle-cock Byzantium, always



*Photographed by Dora Winter Jaixen.*

"Thine eyes, too wise, are heavy with life's dole."



*Photographed by Charles E. Fairman.*

"When Hope is enthroned above."

being swayed by new conquerors and isolated by enmity from all that could teach it; yet it was through Byzantium that the art of the East was first taught to the West, and the prosing Byzantine historians alone have kept record of this connecting link in the great general chain of art.

Returning to the Greek, however, Miss Jaixen has succeeded so well in portraying the idealistic and spiritual that one could fancy her Greek woman to be Helen, looking down on the battle-scoured plains of Troy.

"When Hope is Enthroned Above," photographed by Charles E. Fairman, is another model of Greek simplicity, showing only the twice-girdled chiton without the shoulder drapery. There is exquisite grace in the figure, but the type is not as perfectly Greek as that of "Are



They the Real," and the general feeling of the figure is more modern, in spite of the plain robe and sandalless feet. Sandals, by the way, were often the most expensive items of the toilet; the thongs, and the ribbons which bound them by intricate windings to the feet, giving opportunity for exquisite extravagance of ornament.

"Only as Dreams," photographed by Miss Jennie C. Peet, is full of the Grecian spirit which strives to make all calm and beautiful that is connected with death. The dead have drunk, in the waters of Lethe, forgetfulness of all sorrow and strife, and perhaps, when the peace of Elysian fields has entered their souls, they will return for another life upon the earth. The Athenian maid carries a funeral urn to be placed with the dead, and the bough she holds must



*Photographed by Jennie C. Peet.*

"Only as dreams that are dreamed,  
Only as tales that are told,  
Now all the joy that I hold  
Is but a vision that seemed."



*Photographed by Wm. H. Kibbe.*

"We have worshipped the moon with our hymns,  
And low we have sung to the dance  
When the dusk of the twilight dims  
And the world grows fair in her glance."

be the golden one which alone entitles a living being to cross in Charon's boat.

It is much to be regretted in this picture that the chiton escapes in folds of such even length from under the mourning-bordered himation or cloak, giving the effect of a single garment with the unpardonable anachronism of a ruffle on the hem.

William H. Kibbe's enraptured figure does not have the wreath of Erato, and is undoubtedly Euterpe, the giver of pleasure. She does not hold the characteristic double flute, but then Euterpe was not confined to that, making music on many instruments.

The expression of the face and the pose are what give charm to this figure,

for the costume, while simple and correct, errs like that of "If Once my Thought were Told," by Carrie B. Hicks, in being almost contemporaneous in the conventional arrangement of its draperies. But it is wonderful how much conventionalizing the costume will bear without losing its beauty or individuality. A touch of the Grecian does much for a tea-gown or ball dress, and it seems a thing not too remote to be wished that every leisure garment should feel it. The Greek dress, with its inexhaustible possibilities of interpreting its wearer, would be a very gracious substitute for the stereotyped evening costume.

If students are correct in gathering from Pausanias, against the authority of other historians, that virgins were admitted to witness the



*Photographed by W. B. E. Shufeldt.*

"Who is losing?  
Who is winning?"



*Photographed by W. B. E. Shufeldt.*

"After the games."

Olympic games, then W. B. E. Shufeldt's first group is one of maidens watching the contest; the second, the confidential discussion of it afterward.

The bands worn about the head, as shown in "After the Games," often rivalled the sandals for extravagance. There are no examples among the illustrations of the mitra or bushel-shaped crown, which women copied from Ceres, nor of the tiara worn by Juno and Venus; but the net supporting the hair at the back appears in "When Evening Cometh On," and Charles M. Carter's "Maiden Binding Roses" wears, in addition to the fillet, the wreath of flowers which the Greeks loved so well.

None of Mr. Carter's pictures have any fault of modernness in



*Photographed by Charles M. Carter.*

"Tell me, maiden binding roses,  
Art thou binding hearts as well?"

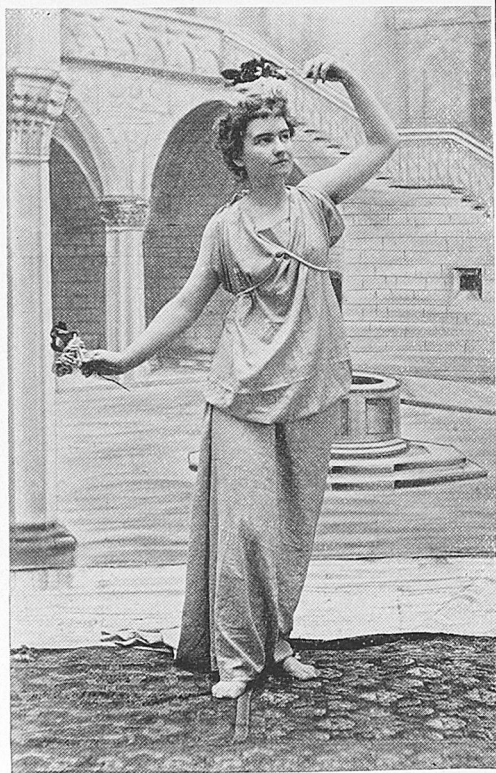


*Photographed by Charles M. Carter.*

"Wake into voice each silent string,  
And sweep the sounding lyre."



robe, but it could be wished that the general tendency of the hair-dressing, not only in these, but in most of the photographs, had been more toward the softly waving locks about the forehead of the blonde in "After the Games." The dress which Mr. Carter's figures wear returns to the long chiton with ends folded over, forming drapery at the shoulders. This drapery is shorter than that of "Are They the Real," with a plain, unbroken border and a loose girdle. In the last of his pictures given here, the chiton is shown dropping from the shoulder, as it was free to do if the wearer desired, for there was great liberty as to the amount of fastening about a chiton. Sometimes the draping was brought over the arm and fastened by but-



*Photographed by Charles E. Fairman.*

SALUTE OF THE ROSE.



*Photographed by A. W. Wilson.*

"If dream, turn real! if vision, stay!"

tons or clasps, so as almost to form a sleeve, while often among athletic women there was only one shoulder-clasp, leaving the other side entirely free. Spartan women at one time left one or both sides of the skirt open for greater freedom of motion, and the huntresses drew the chiton through their girdles, shortening them to their knees.

In "The Salute of the Rose" Mr. Fairman gives us another of his spirited, graceful figures. At once it takes us wandering far a-field, amid the beautiful emblematic customs of the Greeks, who fitted everything with a symbol and found no beauty of form without its corresponding beauty of thought, no thought without its expression in



*Photographed by Charles M. Carter.*

"The ghost of vanished joys pursues us everywhere."

form. It was that constant searching for the correlation between material and spiritual beauty that made Greece what she was. No common artisan, making the commonest articles for daily use, but worked at them constantly with the thought

— perhaps unformulated — “what is fittest, what is most beautiful for this use?” They knew well that beauty means fitness if it be true beauty, and they would not cumber their rougher tools, crockery and garments with the awkward burden of ugliness, nor fancy that ugliness was strength. When even the common people of a nation know this priceless lesson of art, the influences that surround genius are such as to foster its fullest development. Yet the fascinating “Salute of the Rose” has the same latter-day expression in the face that is seen in “When Hope is Enthroned Above,” and to a less degree in “What Vision?” The setting of Mr. Fairman’s pictures is so correct, however, and their sentiment so clearly expressed, that he is even forgiven for their one lack, since ancient Grecian faces are not met at every turn in our nineteenth century.

The photograph sent from England by A. W. Wilson, like two of those by Mr. Carter, has palm-leaves as an appropriate background for the face. The girl’s wrapt eyes are fixed on something beyond our sight, and though her costume is not as perfect in detail as many of the others, she seems to be seeing some shield-bearing hero of old Greece whom the rest of us may never see, even though we haunt the world like Echo, looking as well as calling for him.

These fair visions of another day have occupied the space of this article almost to the exclusion of a word as to their conjuring. They are shadows in a double sense; they give only a suggestion of the form which had a variation for every mood and thought, and like marbles they leave color to the imagination. Yet, brought together here, they spread the ideal which the artist is always trying to establish.



*Photographed by Gertrude Kasebier.*

*“Divinely isolate in mournful thought.”*